

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1 - 2 (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein said fingers form a substantially rectangular connector slot capable of engaging a substantially rectangular connector.

4. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein each of at least two opposing fingers comprise ~~[[a]]~~ an engaging lug in ~~[[the]]~~ said connector slot.

5. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein each of at least two opposing fingers comprise a non-slip grip in ~~[[the]]~~ said connector slot.

6 - 7 (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein each finger comprises ~~[[a]]~~ an engagement lug at its end and ~~[[the]]~~ said fingers form a connector slot that engages the connector by hooking the engagement lug around a distal corner of the connector.

9. (Withdrawn) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ said fingers form a substantially rounded connector slot capable of engaging a substantially rounded connector.

10. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24 that is made from plastic.

11. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ said gripper is tapered from a wider second end to a narrower first end, such that ~~[[the]]~~ said fingers are gradually moved together as they are drawn into said sleeve.

12. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein the fingers flex outward when projected from the sleeves, and are moved inward by ~~[[the]]~~ said sleeve as they are drawn into ~~[[the]]~~ said sleeve.

13. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, wherein said ~~[[the]]~~ fingers flex outward when said connector is engaged in said fingers.~~[[the connector slot]]~~.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The connector tool according to Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 24, further comprising a finger rest at ~~[[the]]~~ said first end of the sleeve.

16. (Withdrawn) A method of holding a cable having a connector comprising:
engaging the connector in a connector slot of a connector tool, wherein the connector tool comprises:
a sleeve comprising a first end, a second end and a gripper channel that extends through the first and second ends; and
a gripper slidably mounted in the gripper channel comprising a handle at a handle end, and fingers at a fingers end that is distal from the handle end, wherein
the sleeve and the gripper are capable of sliding relative to each other such that when the handle is slid to the first end of the sleeve, the fingers project from the second end of the sleeve;
the handle is capable of sliding away from the first end of the sleeve to a sufficient degree for the fingers to be substantially drawn into the second end of the sleeve; and
the fingers form the connector slot; and
drawing the fingers into the sleeve so that the connector is reversibly locked onto the connector tool.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 16, further comprising unlocking the connector by projecting the connector and the fingers out of the sleeve, then disengaging the connector from the connector slot.

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 16, wherein each finger comprises [[a]] an engagement lug in the connector slot, and the engagement lug are engaged by indents in the connector when the connector is engaged in the connector slot.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 16, wherein a end of each finger comprises a engagement lug in the connector slot, and the engagement lugs hook around a distal corner of the connector when the connector is engaged in the connector slot.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 16, wherein [[a]] an end of each finger comprises a plurality of gripping ridges in the connector slot for engaging the connector frictionally.

21.-22 (Cancelled)

23. (Withdrawn) A method of holding a cable having a connector comprising the steps of:
engaging the connector and a cable attached to said connector in a connector slot of a connector tool, wherein the connector tool comprises:

a sleeve comprising a first end, a second end and a gripper channel that extends through the first and second ends; and

a gripper slidably mounted in the gripper channel comprising a handle at a handle end, and fingers at a fingers end that is distal from the handle end, wherein the sleeve and the gripper are capable of sliding relative to each other such that when the handle is slid to the first end of the sleeve, the fingers project from the second end of the sleeve;

the handle is capable of sliding away from the first end of the sleeve to a sufficient degree for the fingers to be substantially drawn into the second end of the sleeve; and

the fingers form the connector slot; and
drawing the fingers into the sleeve so that the connector is reversibly locked onto the
connector tool and said cable is engaged in said slot.--

24. (New) A connector tool adaptable to engage a cable connector, said tool comprising:

a sleeve having a first end and a second end, and

an elongated gripper slidably extending through said sleeve;

said gripper comprising

a handle at a handle end free of said sleeve, and

fingers at a fingers end distal from said handle end adaptable to freely engage
a cable connector,

wherein said gripper is slidable in said sleeve, and

when said handle is slid to said first sleeve end, said fingers project
from said second end free of said sleeve; and

when said handle is slid away from said first sleeve end a sufficient
distance for said fingers to be drawn into said second end; said fingers
are adapted to lock said cable connector into said tool with a remote
portion of said cable connector extending from said sleeve,

said gripper having a cable slot adapted to accommodate a cable attached to said
cable connector.

25. (New) A connector tool adaptable to engage a cable connector, said tool comprising two
pieces, consisting of:

a first piece being a sleeve having a first end and a second end, and

a second piece being an elongated gripper slidably extending through said sleeve;

said gripper having

a handle at a handle end free of said sleeve, and

fingers at a fingers end distal from said handle end adaptable to freely engage

a cable connector,

wherein said gripper is slidable in said sleeve, and

when said handle is slid to said first sleeve end, said fingers project from said second end free of said sleeve; and

when said handle is slid away from said first sleeve end a sufficient distance for said fingers to be drawn into said second end; said fingers are adapted to lock said cable connector into said tool with a remote

portion of said cable connector extending from said sleeve,

said gripper having a cable slot adapted to accommodate a cable attached to said cable connector.

26. (New) In the connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein said gripper has sufficient space in said cable slot and cable channel to permit said cable to slide with said gripper in said sleeve without binding said connector in said gripper.

27. (New) The connector tool according to Claim 25, wherein said connector is adapted to fit loosely in said fingers, and when said fingers with said connector are drawn into said sleeve, the combination of said fingers, connector and sleeve forms an interlocking engagement which reversibly locks the connector on to said connector tool.

28. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein said handle has a stop to prevent its

movement into said sleeve.

29. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein sliding movement of said gripper in said sleeve can be accomplished with one hand of its user.
30. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein said cable connector can be withdrawn from and inserted into said fingers only when said handle is moved to a point where said fingers project from said sleeve.
31. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein movement of said gripper in said sleeve is accomplished without spring action.
32. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25, wherein said sleeve has a finger rest adjacent said handle.
33. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 25 wherein said cable slot extends the full length of said sleeve.
34. (New) The connector tool recited in Claim 33, wherein long juts on the walls of said sleeve define said cable slot.